



## **Report to the Legislature: *Statewide Assistance in the Preparation and Implementation of Professional Development (PD) Plans - FY13***

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This Report summarizes activities related to M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 38Q  
June 2014



This document was prepared by the  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

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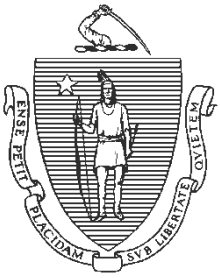
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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370  
[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)





Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

# Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

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75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000  
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

June 2014

Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this *Report to the Legislature: Statewide Assistance in the Development and Implementation of Professional Development Plans* pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 38Q that reads in part:

*“the commissioner of education of the commonwealth shall prepare each year a plan for providing statewide assistance in the preparation and implementation of professional development plans...”*

Students depend on the expertise of the professionals around them to support their learning needs. Education professionals play an important role in promoting student development, growth, and achievement. It is for this reason that all educators have the responsibility to continually build their knowledge, skills, and expertise. Professional development provides powerful opportunities for educators to engage in deep learning that supports the needs of all students.

In FY13, as in years past, the Legislature allocated funds to enable the Department to provide high quality professional development through grant-funded activities. The Department’s predominantly grant-funded professional development opportunities use a combination of state and/or federal funds. Currently, the Department’s assistance to districts in the development of local professional development plans is limited largely to the review and approval of proposed plans consistent with grant funding priorities. These approved plans are typically targeted to particular schools rather than the district as a whole and, for the most part, are directed toward improving educator practice in the highest need communities across the Commonwealth.

As in prior years, limited resources impacted the extent to which the Department was able to provide direct assistance to districts in designing their professional development plans. Currently, such assistance is provided only to districts that receive state or federal grants. The Department does not have the capacity to establish professional development partnerships with all of the districts and schools that are not meeting Progress and Performance Index (PPI)<sup>1</sup> goals.

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<sup>1</sup> PPI replaced Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as Massachusetts’ new accountability measures in early 2012 after the Department received a waiver of certain aspects of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. For more information, please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/accountability/LEABrochure.pdf>.

This report recommends increasing assistance to school districts to prepare and carry out their professional development plans in FY14, to be accomplished by strengthening collaboration with institutions of higher education and private service providers, in cooperation with regional professional development delivery mechanisms (Readiness Centers, District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) and collaboratives.) The report also articulates the Department's priorities and initiatives to strengthen its professional development system.

Implementation of professional development enhancements includes input from and collaboration with many of the Department's offices that directly provide professional development, assist districts in the implementation of local professional development plans, and award Professional Development Points (PDPs) for re-certification and advancement.

If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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## Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature on: *Statewide Assistance in the Preparation and Implementation of Professional Development Plans* pursuant to **M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38Q (last paragraph)**:

*[T]he commissioner of education of the commonwealth shall prepare each year a plan for providing statewide assistance in the preparation and implementation of professional development plans. The plan shall include data that demonstrates, statewide and by school district, the types of professional development provided for educators who work with limited English proficient students. The commissioner shall consult with the board of higher education in developing said plan. This plan shall evaluate the feasibility of obtaining assistance from institutions of higher education and private service providers. The plan shall be submitted to the board of education for approval. A copy of said plan shall be submitted to the joint committee on education, arts, and humanities of the general court....*

As referenced in Chapter 71, Section 38Q of the Massachusetts General Laws, professional development plans include training teachers on curriculum frameworks, pre-referral services within regular education, and instruction strategies for students with limited English proficiency. Effective implementation of standards-based and research-informed instructional practices contributes substantially to the likely success of Massachusetts students in achieving proficiency on the state's standards-based assessments and demonstrating readiness for post-secondary education and the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

## **Background**

### ***State Professional Development Activities***

In FY13, as in years past, the Legislature allocated funds to enable the Department to provide High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD) through grant-funded activities. The Department's predominantly grant-funded professional development opportunities used a combination of state and/or federal funds to sponsor professional development activities. For the third year in a row, the Department received a boost in professional development funding through the federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant initiative.

In FY13, the Department allocated approximately \$11 million in RTTT funds, in addition to the funding provided by the state, to support professional development plans through grant awards and other initiatives (234 districts have received awards in RTTT grant funding). As in past years, the Department's assistance to districts in the development of local professional development plans was limited to the review and approval of proposed plans consistent with grant funding priorities. Assistance with plans has been directed toward improving educator practice in the highest need communities across the Commonwealth. It should be noted, however, that through the RTTT award, the Department has been able to support a number of projects that promote HQPD for educators statewide.

While many of the Department's offices provide high quality grant-funded professional development, the professional development activities of the Center for Assessment and Learning, the Center for Curriculum & Instruction (C&I), the Center for Accountability & Targeted Assistance, Center for Special Education Policy and Planning, and the Center for Educator Quality are highlighted throughout this report as examples of the Department offices with professional development offerings. The following is a summary of the professional development initiatives carried out under the leadership of these centers.

### ***Center for Curriculum & Instruction***

#### **Literacy**

In FY13, the legislature provided \$3,122,940 to support the Consolidated Literacy Program line item 7010-0033. This legislative report covers the FY13 work including literacy professional development grant awards for districts and their external partners and statewide and regional professional development programs. It also offers an evaluation of the district grants and ESE-sponsored professional development supported through the FY12 budget.

The consolidated literacy program line item in FY13 has helped the Department to:

- Fund professional development projects in 75 districts with identified literacy proficiency gaps. Districts applied individually or as a group with a designated district as the fiscal agent. One collaborative, the Collaborative for Educational Services, submitted a proposal on behalf of a group of districts.<sup>2</sup>
- Support adolescent literacy professional development. Prior to FY10, all state funding for literacy was focused on early literacy programs.
- Enable districts to choose their own professional development providers with recognized expertise in particular areas of need as determined through data analysis and aligned with state identified priorities.

In working to close achievement gaps, particularly by third grade by strengthening literacy professional development, the Office of Literacy targets its grants to districts with identified literacy proficiency gaps. In FY13, \$2.6 million in state funds supported grants for grades PreK-3 and 4-12 literacy professional development projects. Two rounds of funding were made available under the FY13 Literacy Partnerships Grant. The Department invited districts designated as Level 3 or 4, i.e., districts that have at least one school that scores in the bottom 20 percent on MCAS, to apply for these grants. In the first round, 64 grants totaling \$2 million and serving 70 public school districts/charter schools were awarded. Districts submitted proposals individually or jointly with other districts. The first round of grants reached about 5,727 teachers and administrators in over 275 schools and affected about 104,193 students - approximately 11 percent of the state's total student enrollment. In the second round of grants, the Department made additional funds available to a second cohort consisting of five newly-eligible Level 3 districts, which increased the number of educators, schools and students affected by the grant program.

FY13 applicants have the potential to receive funds for two years, pending state appropriations and successful achievement of annual partnership goals. FY13 is the first year of this two-year grant program.

The primary purpose of the grant program is to support alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, and literacy planning with the 2011 *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy*, which incorporates the *Common Core State Standards*. In particular, the grant focuses on implementing the 2011 *Curriculum Frameworks*, improving literacy outcomes at grade 3, and increasing college and career readiness.

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<sup>2</sup> Listing of Districts/Collaborative funded in FY13:

FY13: Round 1: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/grants13/awards/738.html>

FY13: Round 2: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/Grants/grants13/awards/738\\_a.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/Grants/grants13/awards/738_a.html)



The Department identified four priority areas and asked districts to prioritize their proposed professional development according to the following areas:

1. Piloting and providing commentary on Department-developed model curriculum units and curriculum-embedded performance assessments in literacy.
2. Designing and implementing innovative summer programs that build content knowledge and strengthen literacy through reading, writing, speaking, listening, using community and cultural resources in science, the humanities, and the arts.
3. Providing intensive professional development for teachers and administrators on reading, analyzing, and writing about complex grade-level texts and developing academic vocabulary.
4. Writing or revising district literacy plans to reflect the shifts in the *2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for the English Language Arts and Literacy*.

Districts could choose to address more than one priority area. The grants awarded addressed all four priority areas. The table below presents the number of districts that chose each priority area:

**Table 1: FY2013 Literacy Partnership Grants by Priority Area**

Priority Area	Number of Districts
1: Piloting Model Curriculum Units and Performance Assessments	34
2: Conducting Summer Literacy Programs	4
3: Providing Professional Development on Using Complex Texts and Developing Academic Vocabulary	58
4: Writing or Revising District Literacy Plans	15

The Model Curriculum Units mentioned in Priority Area 1 are being developed under the Commonwealth's RTTT grant. To support the Department's goal of improving literacy outcomes for grade 3, this component of the grant program focuses on English language arts and literacy units for grades 2 and 3. Aligned with the 2011 *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, the units and corresponding lesson plans use complex grade-level texts with rich vocabulary, as well as have performance assessments through which students demonstrate their skills in reading,

writing, speaking, listening, and language. Literacy Partnership grant funding allows these districts to purchase books and other curriculum materials used in the units and to support teachers in implementation.

## Mathematics and Science

The Office for Science, Technology/Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in the Center for Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) oversees the Mathematics and Science Teacher Content-Based Professional Development state budget line-item, 7061-9804. For FY13, \$346,162 was allocated to primarily support the 2013 Professional Development Institutes Program. The mathematics and science professional development courses are designed to be scaled-up and are also offered regionally as part of a statewide system of support.

- The Professional Development Institute Program<sup>3</sup> is a statewide program that has been offered by the Department for 18 years. Each summer, the Department funds approximately 15-20, graduate level courses in mathematics and science, based on available funding, thereby providing free professional development to 300-500 Massachusetts educators. Each course in mathematics and science is comprised of 45 hours of direct instruction and an additional 10-15 hours that support implementation of the course content into the participants' classrooms. In FY13, this program offered 18 Professional Development Institutes to approximately 415 mathematics and science educators across the state.
- The Office for Mathematics and Science also manages the federal No Child Left Behind Act: Title IIB Mathematics and Science Partnership Program<sup>4</sup>. This competitive program awards three-year grants to partnerships of higher education STEM departments with high-need school districts. These partnerships offer a course or a series of content-based courses to teachers in the partner districts. Each course is a graduate level course of at least 45 hours and teachers are pre/post-tested for content knowledge gain. In some partnerships, the series of courses lead to the attainment of a Master's Degree. During FY13, 21 courses were offered to educators from more than 17 mainly high-need districts, serving approximately 380 mathematics and science teachers.
- Through the RTTT grant, districts can participate in the Advancing College Readiness Program and receive pre-Advance Placement (AP) teacher training in science, mathematics, and English Language Arts (ELA). Pre-AP teacher training is high quality professional development designed to assist vertical teams<sup>5</sup> of teachers in developing curricula, instruction, and performance expectations that prepare students for AP and other higher level coursework. Vertical teams

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/institutes/2013/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/grants.html>

<sup>5</sup> A vertical team is a team comprised of educators across grade levels, e.g., grades 6, 7, and 8 or by content area, e.g., mathematics, ELA, etc.

matriculate through the pre-AP teacher training together and then meet back at their district to align curriculum, implement pre-AP lessons and strategies, and create more rigorous, standards-based curriculum.

The training is 12 days over three years (four days per summer) and offered to middle school and high school teachers in ELA, mathematics, general science, biology, physics, and chemistry. Mass Insight Education, the vendor for this program, works with Laying the Foundation trainers and materials to implement the program. In FY13, including the summer of 2012 through early summer 2013, approximately 1,200 teachers (635 in mathematics and science) were trained in 74 districts.

- Additionally, a substantial amount of mathematics professional development is offered as part of a statewide system of support for mathematics<sup>6</sup>. These graduate level courses are primarily offered to Level 3 districts and made available through funds associated with the regional DSACs. Districts that are participating in the federal RTTT grant may also fund teachers to attend these courses. STEM established the menu of available courses and coordinated with professional development providers to match up course offerings with district requests. In FY13, approximately 40 courses were offered through the statewide system of support, serving over 1,000 mathematics educators.

## ***Center for Assessment & Learning***

### **English Language Acquisition**

The Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA) oversees the English Language Acquisition Professional Development (PD) state budget line-item 7027-1004. In FY13, approximately \$603,153 was appropriated to support PD for educators of English language learners (ELLs) implementing sheltered English immersion (SEI) and teaching English language acquisition. This funding supported the professional development of approximately 3,500 teachers. The Department used this funding to help develop PD capability within districts in multiple ways:

1. By hosting several train-the-trainer workshops for the SEI Endorsement classes in which approximately 90 educators participated to become SEI PD trainers.
2. By developing four SEI Endorsement courses including three teacher courses and one administrator course to be used for the entire length of the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) course window (2012-13 to 2015-16).

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/pd/default.html>

3. By funding the procurement of approximately 90 pilot and full SEI courses.
4. By funding one partnership initiative between districts and higher education institutions in order to build capacity within districts to prepare teachers to work with ELLs.

This project was led by the University of Massachusetts - Amherst and it supported the Access to Critical Content and English Language Acquisition (ACCELA)/ESE scholarships for urban classroom teachers in the western part of the state.

OELAAA also used federal funds from Race to the Top (RTTT) and Title III. In FY13, approximately \$250,000 was appropriated to support PD for educators of ELLs implementing the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), which is a statewide initiative to introduce and implement a new set of standards across all content areas and assessment for ELLs.

During the fall and spring of SY2012-2013, the Department sponsored twenty regional trainings and numerous other district-specific workshops and consultations with these funds. The trainings were very well received by educators. More than 850 teachers and administrators participated in state sponsored WIDA PD this past school year. Funds were used for several types of PD offerings described below:

1. Basic WIDA Overviews: One-day overview workshops of the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards framework focused on introducing the basic components and organization of the framework. Funds were used to pay for trainers.
2. Basic WIDA Training of Trainers: Three-day workshops focused on introducing components of the WIDA ELD standards framework and providing participants with ideas and activities to provide WIDA trainings to colleagues back in their district. Funds were used to pay for trainers.
3. ELL Curriculum Development Trainings: Three-day workshops presenting an approach for integrating WIDA standards framework components into lessons and units for ELLs. These trainings were developed for educators who had already participated in basic WIDA trainings, but wanted to go deeper into using WIDA in lesson and unit planning. Funds were used to pay for training development, trainers, materials, and space rental.
4. WIDA Consultants for Commissioner's Districts: Multiple trainings, consultations, and workshops offered by the Department contracted WIDA consultants who worked directly with district leadership to tailor PD to district needs. Each one of the 10 Commissioner's Districts was offered five days of PD that could be structured by district leadership as needed along with two planning days with the designated consultant. Funds were used to pay for contracted consultants.

5. WIDA Workshops at Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) Conferences: Three-hour presentations and structured work time focused on developing a strategic plan for rolling out the WIDA standards at the district level and lesson planning with WIDA tools for Title III districts who failed to meet their AMAO targets. Funds were used to pay for trainers.

The Department has acted quickly to make available high quality training so that all core academic teachers of ELLs earn the newly created SEI endorsement. We estimate that 26,000 teachers currently instruct ELLs in core academic subjects, and that number is growing. The SEI endorsement training program began for approximately 2,000 teachers on February 25, 2013. The training will ramp up significantly in 2013-14, when approximately 9,000 educators are slated for training. The program will continue through August 2016. Three cohorts of districts will participate in the trainings, starting in those districts with the highest incidence of ELLs and the greatest achievement gaps. Participants who successfully complete the 45-hour graduate-level course will earn the SEI endorsement to their educator license.

## **Center for Accountability & Targeted Assistance**

### **District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)**

The DSACs<sup>7</sup> in the Center for Accountability and Targeted Assistance oversee state-funded District and School Assistance funding, as well as the federal No Child Left Behind Title I School Improvement funding.

- In FY13, the District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) provided \$2,000,000 in grant assistance to 58 Level 3 districts and districts exiting Level 3 in 2012 (\$600,000 in state targeted assistance funds and \$1,400,000 in federal Title I funds).
- Districts were expected to work collaboratively with their regional DSAC team to develop plans for grant fund use that effectively supported their District and School Improvement Plans and would assist in their efforts to address the District Standards and the Conditions for School Effectiveness<sup>8</sup>. Districts are using funds in three broad areas to:
  1. Support educator participation in DSAC-approved literacy and mathematics professional development.
  2. Support educator participation in targeted assistance activities with their regional DSAC team.

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<sup>7</sup> Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/teams/default.html> for a list of DSAC districts.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/general/>

3. Fund other professional development in areas not addressed by DSAC-approved coursework or to support other types of district initiatives.
- In 2013, half (49.5 percent) of total grant funds were used to purchase seats for 1,448 educators in high-quality DSAC-approved mathematics and literacy professional development offerings or locally selected, with DSAC approval, professional development opportunities. The percentage of state Targeted Assistance funds (44.5%) used for that purpose mirrored that of the overall grant and funded over 423 seats in those courses. Professional development costs included 60% for vendor costs and 40% for stipends and/or substitutes and materials to support educator participation in professional development. The remainder (51.5 percent) of DSAC grant funds supported other targeted assistance activities with DSAC teams, such as engagement in the Conditions for School Effectiveness Self-Assessment process, or other district initiatives, e.g., developing formative assessments to address the new *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. A third major use of state Targeted Assistance funds included paying contractors to support the implementation of other district initiatives identified through a rigorous planning process.

#### Office of Tiered System of Supports

- The Office of Tiered System of Supports works closely with the Center for Special Education Planning and Policy to develop and oversee professional development for tiered support.

#### Center for Special Education Planning and Policy

The Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office and the Office of Tiered System of Supports collaborated to oversee professional development supported by federal special education funds. In FY12, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Part B: Technical Assistance funds supported the following professional development activities:

- Program Improvement Grant (Fund Code 274). In FY13, \$7,000,000 was allocated to support program improvement grants to advance the skills of educators working with students with disabilities through high-quality, intensive, and sustained professional development activities. All public school districts and educational collaboratives were eligible to apply for this grant<sup>9</sup>. This grant had five priorities:
  1. Educator Effectiveness
  2. Content Skill Development

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<sup>9</sup> Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/entitlement-allocation.aspx?view=code&fy=2013&code=274> for a list of districts that were awarded this grant.

3. Non-Academic Supports
  4. Early Childhood Inclusive Practices
  5. Secondary Transition
- Program Improvement Grant (Fund Code 249). In FY13, \$240,000 was allocated to enhance program-based induction, mentoring, and retention programs to advance the skills of educators through professional development activities. All approved private special education schools are eligible to apply for this grant program. This grant had four priorities:
    1. Educator Effectiveness
    2. Content Knowledge
    3. Non-Academic Supports
    4. Secondary Transition
  - Early Childhood Special Education Program Improvement Grant (Fund Code 298). In FY13, \$985,824 was allocated to ensure that eligible children with disabilities, ages three to five, receive a free and appropriate public education that includes special education and related services designed to meet their individual needs and are provided in natural/least restrictive environments. This grant has three priorities:
    1. Strengthening Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
    2. Improving Educator Effectiveness
    3. Using Data and Technology to Support Student Performance
  - Social Emotional Management: Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors (Indicator 7): The Department of Early Education and Care partnered with the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office to provide professional development in the area of *Social Emotional Management: Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors*. Topics covered during this professional development included:
    1. Early Childhood Outcomes
    2. Practice in the Application of Social Skills
    3. Tools for Managing Behavior
    4. Behavioral Health Assessment and Screening
    5. Using Outcome Data to Plan for the Child
  - Massachusetts Special Education Leadership Academies. In FY13, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds in the amount of \$367,934 were spent to provide leadership academies that make available professional development to special education administrators and their teams intended to inform participants of the laws that regulate special education, develop leadership skills, and help administrators become change agents within their school system, which will lead to positive educational outcomes for students with disabilities and their families. Each academy has been developed to meet the unique needs of the organizations they represent:

- Special Education Leadership Academy
  - Special Education Leadership Academy: Vocational Technical Education Programs
  - Special Education Leadership Academy: Level 3 districts served by the six regionally-based District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)
- Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA). In FY13, a federal personnel development grant provided \$2,148,996 for the 2012-2013 Massachusetts FOCUS Academy that is housed on MASSONE, which is a professional development portal with a “sunset date” of July 2013, as an integrated statewide online professional development system. Courses were free to the individual educator, resulting in Professional Development Points (PDPs), and college credits were available to educators at a reduced rate. Close to 1,000 educators participated in these courses during FY13. Courses provided:
  - Career Development and Competitive Employment
  - Creating and Sustaining Positive School and Classroom Learning Environments
  - Developing Teacher-Leaders Course
  - Differentiated Instruction
  - Generalist Transition Course
  - How to Partner With Families of Middle and High School Students with Disabilities
  - Implementing Collaborative Teaching
  - Parent and Professional Partnerships: Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities in Middle and High School
  - Parent/Professional Leadership Institutes
  - Post-secondary Education
  - Professional Development for Early Intervention Specialists and Allied Health Workers
  - Universal Design for Learning I and II
  - Universal Design for Learning/Mathematics
  - Universal Design for Learning/Engagement
- Massachusetts Licensure Academy. The Massachusetts Licensure Academy (MLA) has been created by the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office and the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA) of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to assist teachers to meet the qualifications needed to become a licensed educator. The MLA provides graduate-level courses that address the competencies for the preliminary licensure of Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities and the content information included in the ESL/MTEL. In FY13, the second year of this initiative, \$78,000 was spent from special education funds. Individual districts had RTTT funds available to provide for mentoring, substitutes and other costs associated with the program. Courses provided in the second year of this program included:



- Assessment for Determination of Education Needs, Curriculum, Services and Programs, Including Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Other Assistive Technologies
  - Federal and State Laws, Educational Terminology and the Role of Other Agencies Pertaining to the Education of Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
  - Second Language Acquisition (SLA)
  - Methods and Approaches for Teaching English as a Second Language
  - Teaching Reading and Writing to English Learners
  - The World of English Language Learners (ELLs)
- Universal Design for Learning Workshop: Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). In FY13, ESE allocated \$89,000 and sponsored 170 educators from 36 districts to participate in the CAST two-day workshop as teams. The institute highlighted Universal Design for Learning (UDL), emphasizing the UDL guidelines and application to practice, including the connections between learning and neuroscience, the three UDL principles and related benchmarks and checkpoints, and the curriculum framework of goals, methods, materials, and assessment as a structure for designing lessons.
  - Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Summer Institutes: Harvard Graduate School of Education – Universal Design for Learning: Reaching All Learners. In FY1, ESE allocated \$88,000 to sponsor 11 district teams, including six DSAC districts and their Regional Assistance Director (RAD) to participate in a five-day program.

Content included studying the latest brain research, acquiring practical, classroom-based and school-based applications to implement differentiated instruction to address the diversity of students in the classroom, customize teaching and learning using new technologies to meet the challenge of engaging all learners with diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds.

- Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS): Next Steps in Universal Design for Learning. In FY13, \$732,000 was allocated to support 15 DSAC districts' efforts to plan for the implementation of UDL as part of a tiered system of support. The goal of the grant was to provide school and district leaders, administrators and educators the opportunity to work in teams to promote a culture of inclusivity through universally designed instruction. Sixteen districts and 111 administrators/educators from 'Commissioner's or 'DSAC' districts participated in this eight-day institute.
- Special Education Professional Development Institutes. In FY13, \$252,504 was allocated for special education professional development institutes designed to provide sustained, High-Quality Professional Development (HQPDP) for educators who work with students with disabilities in selected districts across the state. Institutes provided:
  - Assistive Technology and Accessible Instructional Materials

- Assistive Technology and Universal Design: Leveling the Playing Field Together Meeting the Academic and Non-Academic Needs of Students with Asperger Syndrome
  - Connecting Science and Literacy: Talking, Writing and Reading as Tools of Science
  - Developing Mathematical Practices for Geometry, Algebra II and Beyond
  - Effective Evaluations
  - Teaching Students with Cortical/Cerebral Impairment (CVI)
  - Improving Spoken and Written Language: From Research to Practice (Landmark Outreach Program)
  - Managing Behavior in an Inclusive Classroom
  - Occupational Therapy (and Physical Therapy) in Educational Settings
  - Strategies for Students with Sensory Processing Disorders in Inclusive School Settings
  - Tools and Strategies for Paraprofessionals in Inclusive Settings
- Massachusetts Secondary Transition Capacity-Building Conference. In April 2013, the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office held a capacity-building conference on secondary transition for 120 four-person leadership teams representing districts, collaboratives, vocational-technical schools, and approved private schools. The purposes of this conference were to:
    - Provide district leadership teams with essential knowledge about the transition planning process, both as a cohesive, integrated system and from the perspective of evidence-based practices in self determination; transition assessment; career development; post-secondary education and training; and family engagement and community collaboration.
    - Engage district leadership teams in a data-based planning process designed to improve post-secondary outcomes for all students with disabilities.
    - Keynotes included Dr. Michael Wehmeyer, University of Kansas, and Dr. Thomas Hehir, Harvard University.
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Satellite Series. In FY13, \$4,500 was allocated to purchase a site license for distance learning opportunities from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). This series is available to all Massachusetts school districts and educational organizations. This year's topics are:
    - Autism Today: Evidence -Based Practices and Tools for Implementing Successful Programs
    - Improving Social Emotional Health in Schools: Evidence-Based Strategies for Young Children
    - Online Learning for Students with Disabilities: What We Know and What We Need to Know
    - Educating Students with Hearing and Vision Challenges: Innovations for Success

## **Center for Educator Quality**

### **Educator Leadership**

The Office of Educator Policy, Preparation, and Leadership (EPPL) works with the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) to support the implementation of instructional leadership training for school and district leaders. In FY13, districts were responsible for allocating funds (RTTT or other) towards the training of their leaders. In FY 13, 140 school and district leaders began NISL training in six cohorts across the state. For more information, please go to: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edleadership/nisl/>

### **Agency-wide**

In addition to the centers mentioned above, there are several other centers within the Department that oversee state-sponsored grant-funded professional development. These centers also are responsible for pre-qualifying registered professional development providers who award Professional Development Points (PDPs) to Massachusetts educators for re-certification. Registered providers are pre-qualified through an application and approval process carried out by office staff, although the Center for Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) maintains the Department's database of registered providers.

## Continuous Improvement of State Professional Development (PD) Plan

As previously mentioned, the Department continued to provide high-quality professional development opportunities to districts that were recipients of state and federal grant funds. Such grants supported professional development programs and activities that not only demonstrated alignment with the Department's goals and priorities but the capacity to advance educators' content knowledge and skills. As in prior years, the Department maintained its commitment to provide professional development opportunities to the school districts in high need communities. Sustained funding from the federal RTTT grant award allowed the Department to offer more professional development programs and activities to more high need districts than it could have with state resources alone.

Unfortunately, even with these additional funds, the Department was unable to provide direct assistance to all school districts in the preparation and implementation of their professional development plans. Thus, in FY13 assistance was provided only to those districts that were recipients of state or federal grants.

Funding provided through RTTT, however, allowed the Department to take several bold steps in an effort to improve and expand professional development delivery and quality assurance. For example, the Center for Curriculum and Instruction took the lead in working with representatives from each center in the agency to publish the Department's first set of standards for professional development. *The Massachusetts Standards for High Quality Professional Development* were released in May 2013 and are available on the Department's Web site at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.html>. A set of companion tools and resources, such as an implementation guide and valuation toolkit, will be made available soon. The professional development standards, resources and tools were developed in partnership with national consultants and internal and external stakeholders to assist Massachusetts school districts in the development of and implementation of their professional development plans.

In 2013, with RTTT funding, the Department was also able to expand its professional development reach to Massachusetts educators through the development of a suite of curriculum tools housed in the State's new *Edwin Teaching & Learning platform*<sup>10</sup>. Between 2012 and 2013, the Center for Curriculum and Instruction facilitated the development of 90 Model Curriculum Units (MCU's)<sup>11</sup> including lesson plans and curriculum maps that will serve as exemplars of standards-based tools and curricular resources. This suite of curriculum tools is currently being rolled out to Massachusetts educators, supported by professional development and training that will continue into FY14. An integrated system that will provide one-stop access to curriculum, assessment and reporting tools, along with digital materials and resources aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, The *Edwin Teaching and Learning platform* will aid Massachusetts teachers in individualizing their classroom instruction.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/>

<sup>11</sup> Please visit [www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model](http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model) for more information regarding this project.

With RTTT funds, the Department was also able to fund the position of a Professional Development Coordinator. In FY13, the coordinator was responsible for:

1. Leading the development of the FY13 statewide professional development plan with assistance from a department-wide committee of staff with expertise in professional development
2. Working closely with the Department's Center for Targeted Assistance to ensure that the goals of professional development and targeted support are complementary and consistent
3. Conducting assessments of the Department's current professional development delivery system including alignment with the Department priorities
4. Developing a plan to enhance the state's capacity to serve all of its public school districts through enhanced partnerships and better use of its regional delivery mechanisms
5. Establishing a database to ensure consistent communication and increased access of all Department sponsored professional development offerings
6. Establishing protocols and procedures for grants and procurement to improve the quality of state sponsored professional development, including a new application and review process for vendors and providers
7. Designing and maintaining a Professional Development Web site for the Department<sup>12</sup>

Given the limited staffing and resources within the Department, it is critical that the Professional Development Coordinator lead the effort to work with state and regional partners to establish a well articulated statewide system for professional development. In FY14, the Department will work with the Board of Higher Education and private service providers to prioritize the Department's priorities in alignment with district needs that can be addressed through professional development.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/>

## **Working Plan for FY14 Statewide Professional Development (PD)**

As required by the Education Reform Law of 1993, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) herein presents its 2013-2014 Massachusetts Plan for Professional Development. This Plan supports the implementation of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, particularly the new *English Language Arts and Mathematics Frameworks*, through curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices, and promotes professional development as an integral part of Department activities. The Plan is based on the premise that strong classroom teachers, visionary instructional leaders, and HQPD are essential to the reform of public education and to the improvement of student learning. This plan addresses the following topics:

- Department's FY14 Priorities for Educator Professional Development (PD)
- Massachusetts Standards for High Quality Professional Development (HQPD)
- Professional Development (PD) Initiatives of the Department
- Responsibilities of School Districts & Providers

### ***FY14 Priorities for Educator Professional Development (PD)***

The Department has identified four agency-wide priorities. The plan has been updated to ensure that the Department's professional development plan supports these priorities and delivers results in:

1. Strengthening curriculum, instruction, and assessment
2. Improving educator effectiveness
3. Turning around the lowest performing districts and schools
4. Using technology and data effectively to support student achievement

### ***Massachusetts Standards for High Quality Professional Development (PD)***

The Department issued the Massachusetts Standards for HQPD, with guiding principles and indicators and published them on the Departments Web site at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.html> in May 2013. The 10 standards are based on research on effective professional development and have been vetted by a committee of professional development stakeholders at the Department. The Department has also received feedback and input from districts and educational partners.

Is it important to note that in order to drive the message that effectiveness and quality matters, the Department employs the term High-Quality Professional Development (HQPD), which is defined as:

*“A set of coherent learning experiences that is systematic, purposeful, and structured over a sustained period of time with the goal of improving teacher practice and student outcomes. It enables educators to facilitate the learning of students by acquiring and applying knowledge, skills, and abilities that address student needs and improvement goals of the district, school, and individual. HQPD conforms to best practices in research and relates to educators' assignments and professional responsibilities, and conforms to the ten Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development.”*

To summarize, HQPD:

1. Has clear goals and objectives relevant to desired student outcomes.
2. Aligns with state, district, school, and/or educator goals or priorities.
3. Is designed based on the analysis of data relevant to the identified goals, objectives, and audience.
4. Is assessed to ensure that it is meeting the targeted goals and objectives.
5. Promotes collaboration among educators to encourage sharing of ideas and working together to achieve the identified goals and objectives.
6. Advances an educator's ability to apply learning from the professional development to his/her particular content and/or context.
7. Models good pedagogical practice and applies knowledge of adult learning theory to engage educators.
8. Makes use of relevant resources to ensure that the identified goals and objectives are met.
9. Is taught or facilitated by a professional who is knowledgeable about the identified objectives.
10. Sessions connect and build upon each other to provide a coherent and useful learning experience for educators.

## ***Professional Development (PD) Initiatives of the Department***

In Massachusetts' RTTT grant application, the Department wrote:

*“To put desired reforms into practice in classrooms, we need to devote substantial and systematic attention to implementation support for educators, largely in the form of professional development. Short of this, our reforms will be nothing more than hopes and aspirations.” (p. 134)*

To that end, as described earlier in this report, under the leadership of the Center for Curriculum and Instruction and with funding from RTTT, the Department will execute four professional development projects that will serve as the focus of the Department's professional development plan for FY14:

1. The State Standards for Professional Development (PD) Project supports the Department's strategic initiative of high quality educators. This project underpins many other professional development projects, including those related to educator quality, licensure, and the support of Level 3 and 4 schools and districts. This project will address

the need for quality professional development offerings across the state, both those offered by districts and those offered by the state, by articulating standards for professional development that lead to high-quality, high-impact learning experiences for educators.

2. The Professional Development Delivery System Project addresses the need for a coordinated delivery system for state-sponsored professional development across the range of units, projects, and purposes of the Department in a way that ensures attention to high priority initiatives. This project supports multiple strategic initiatives for the Department, including high quality educators, school and district turnaround, high quality curriculum, instruction and assessment, and effective use of data. From the perspective of the field, this project is meant to provide a systematic process by which educators and district personnel can easily find, access, and engage in state-sponsored professional development that relate to district and educator needs and implement the Department's high priority initiatives. This work is closely associated with the other RTTT professional development projects that ensure high quality professional development providers who are essential to making much of the Department's professional development possible.
3. The Professional Development Quality Assurance project will establish policies, guidelines, and tools to support and promote the delivery of high quality professional development to Massachusetts educators by the ESE, educational collaboratives, districts, registered or approved organizations, and individuals who provide professional development services. The current professional development quality assurance system used by the Department is inadequate. Beyond the initial approval of state-registered PD vendors and providers, there is little oversight or monitoring of the professional development that is delivered to educators. When the new professional development quality assurance system is launched, current providers will have to re-apply to be accepted and then periodically thereafter.
4. The Data In Action (DIA) Project supports Massachusetts' RTTT goal of educating 25,000 educators in data use by August 2014. To that end, ESE will contract with an outside professional development vendor to:
  - a) Develop and pilot six professional development courses (online, blended, and face-to-face) that promote and support educators' effective data use
  - b) Differentiate course content according to educators' specific roles and needs
  - c) Develop and execute a plan for sustainability and quality assurance including, but not limited to, the development of a train-the-trainer model and approval protocols for ESE preferred professional development providers for DIA course delivery



## **Responsibilities of School Districts**

School districts are required to adopt and implement a district improvement plan that stipulates the district's professional development plans for all professional staff employed by the district, and school council members.

*G.L. c. 69 s. 11 (District Improvement Plans)*

*“The 3-year comprehensive district plan, annual district action plan and annual school improvement plan shall replace any district and school plans previously required under the education reform including, but not limited to, the school improvement plans required by section 59C of chapter 71, the provisional educator program plan required by section 38G of chapter 71, the professional development plan required by section 38Q of chapter 71, the curriculum accommodation plan required by section 38Q1/2 of chapter 71, the MCAS success plan, if any, required under this section and any other report or plan called for by the General Laws or regulation, which, in the professional opinion of the commissioner, would be most effectively presented as part of the coordinated district or school plan for improving student achievement. The department shall identify any additional reports or plans called for by any general law or regulation which can be incorporated into this single filing in order to reduce paperwork and eliminate duplication.”*

The District Standards and Indicators<sup>13</sup> identify the characteristics of effective districts in supporting and sustaining school improvement which address the district's role in professional development as follows:

**“3. Professional Development:** District and school organization, culture and structures create a climate conducive to adult learning through effective communication, ongoing professional improvement and joint responsibility for student learning. The district maintains a strong commitment to creating and sustaining a professional development program that supports educators at all stages in their careers. Professional development programs and services are based on district priorities, information about staff needs, student achievement data, and assessments of instructional practices and programs at each school. Programs progress developmentally and differentiate for educators' different areas of responsibility and levels of expertise and experience. The district supports teacher leadership and growth by creating opportunities for exemplary teachers to have responsibility for instructional leadership and mentoring. **Professional development includes a) both job-embedded and individually pursued learning, including content-based learning, that enhances a teacher's knowledge and skills and b) structures for collaboration that enable teachers to have regular, frequent department and/or grade-level common planning and meeting time that is used to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practice. (CSE#7)”**

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/review/district/StandardsIndicators.pdf>

Level 4 Schools are required to establish Turnaround Plans<sup>14</sup>, which addresses professional development as follows:

*“Among the changes to policy and strategy that superintendents may consider in developing their Turnaround Plans are three that relate to professional development and collaboration, outlined below:*

- 1. Include a provision of job-embedded professional development for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback;*
- 2. Provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction;*
- 3. Establish a plan for professional development for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership”*

## Guidelines for an Effective District Plan

Finally, the *Guidelines for Reviewing, Approving, and Endorsing Individual Professional Development Plans*<sup>15</sup> address district professional development planning as follows:

*“When setting district professional development goals, the most important criterion to be considered is the identified learning needs of the students. Student performance on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and other standardized tests administered by the district must be a part of identifying educational strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the percentage of students reading at a level appropriate to their age, student graduation rates, the percentage of students continuing on to post-secondary institutions, and other assessments that enable students to demonstrate mastery of the Frameworks and district curricula should be considered.”*

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level4/turnaround-plan.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/01guideline/dist.html>

## ***Responsibilities of External Professional Development (PD) Providers***

All registered professional development providers are expected to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of professional development offerings and to assess their impact, if any, on classroom practice
- Address the content of the relevant *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*
- Conduct professional development with clear objectives, relevant learning activities, and conclusions
- Conduct professional development that recognizes the overlapping and different needs of beginning and veteran educators
- Incorporate technology tools and appropriate media, as warranted
- Build on educators' prior knowledge and experience
- Use principles of adult learning theory to engage educators in professional growth
- Employ a variety of teaching techniques such as direct instruction, small group discussion, practice with peer feedback, problem-solving, Socratic dialogue, and research projects
- Provide numerous and varied opportunities for educators to incorporate new knowledge and skills into classroom practice or school and district management
- Evaluate teacher learning through an appropriate assessment. For example, this may be a written exam, a lesson plan, or a curriculum unit